

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 030235  
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY PM/ISO:JEBURGRESS/NEA/ARP:JWTWINAM:CEJ  
APPROVED BY P:PHABIB  
NEA:ALATHERTON  
OSD/ISA:LJANKA  
NAVY: (OP-61):RADM BARROW (INFO)  
PM:GCHURCHILL  
AF/I:WHELEWIS  
S/S: MR. SEBASTIAN

-----100540Z 119766 /22

P 100223Z FEB 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY VICTORIA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS PRIORITY  
INFO AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 030235

EXDIS - FOR THE AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MORG, PK, KE, IR, BA, MU, SA, MP

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SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST FORCE - THE NEW FORMAT

REF: MANAMA 244

1. FOR SEVERAL MONTHS THERE HAS BEEN INTENSE EFFORT WITHIN  
USG TO DEVISE SOME ACCEPTABLE FORMULA TO PERSUADE BAHRAIN  
TO REVERSE ITS 1975 DECISION TERMINATING THE US MIDDLE

EAST FORCE (MIDEASTFOR) COMMAND STATIONING AGREEMENT  
EFFECTIVE JUNE 30, 1977. CONSULTATIONS WITH BAHRAIN TO THIS  
END ARE CONTINUING. AS ADDRESSEES MAY BE AWARE, MIDDLE  
EAST FORCE HAS BEEN OPERATING IN GULF/INDIAN OCEAN AREA OUT  
OF BAHRAIN SINCE MID-1940S.

2. UPON BAHRAIN'S INDEPENDENCE A STATIONING AGREEMENT WAS  
FORMALLY REACHED BY DECEMBER 1971 EXECUTIVE AGREEMENT.  
BAHRAIN INVOKED ONE-YEAR TERMINATION CLAUSE OF THE AGREEMENT  
DURING OCTOBER 1973 ARAB-ISRAELI HOSTILITIES BUT SUB-  
SEQUENTLY RESCINDED THIS ACTION SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATION OF  
NEW CONDITIONS FOR MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE (INCLUDING  
DOLS 4 MILLION YEAR RENT FOR FACILITIES, CERTAIN ADJUSTMENTS  
TO IMPLEMENTATION OF PROVISIONS FOR CRIMINAL JURISDICTION  
OVER USN PERSONNEL AND USG ASSURANCE THAT MIDDLE EAST FORCE  
WOULD NOT: "...BE UTILIZED IN ANY MANNER TO ASSIST OR SUPPORT  
DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY ANY MILITARY ACTION OR OPERATION  
AGAINST NEIGHBORING STATES IN THE GULF AREA.")

3. THESE CONDITIONS WERE SUCCESSFULLY MET THROUGH NEGOTIA-  
TION BY EARLY 1975 BUT IN THAT SUMMER BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT,  
CITING REGIONAL AND DOMESTIC PRESSURE AGAINST CONTINUING  
TO PROVIDE FACILITIES TO AN OUTSIDE POWER FORMALLY RE-  
QUESTED MIDDLE EAST FORCE WITHDRAWAL BY MID-1977.

4. ESSENCE OF PROBLEM IS THAT BAHRAIN, WHICH OTHERWISE  
PROFESSES TO SEEK CLOSEST POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP WITH US,  
CLAIMS IT CAN NO LONGER BEAR FULL "POLITICAL BURDEN" OF  
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BEING SOLE COUNTRY IN AREA PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR US  
MIDEASTFOR. HENCE FROM FIRST YEAR AFTER MID-1975 DECISION  
BAHRAIN GOVERNMENT INSISTED THAT PUBLIC SAUDI AND/OR  
IRANIAN SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE  
IN BAHRAIN WOULD BE ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOR REVERSING  
DECISION TO TERMINATE AGREEMENT. NO SUCH PUBLIC SUPPORT  
HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING TO DATE.

5. SINCE SUMMER 1976 WE HAVE BEEN EXPLORING INFORMAL  
BAHRAIN SUGGESTION THAT EXPANDED US SECURITY ASSISTANCE  
RELATIONSHIP MIGHT BE SUFFICIENT PRICE FOR BAHRAIN'S EX-  
TENDING STATIONING AGREEMENT BEYOND JUNE 1977. GOB HAS  
ALSO ASKED THAT USG COME UP WITH "NEW FORMULA" TO RE-  
ARRANGE MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE IN MANNER WHICH WILL  
SHARE "POLITICAL BURDEN" AMONG AREA STATES.

6. DEPT SHARES WITH DOD THE GOAL OF RETAINING MIDDLE EAST  
FORCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN/PERSIAN GULF IF THAT IS  
POSSIBLE. (REFTEL REPORTS LATEST EXPRESSION OF BAHRAIN

GOVERNMENT VIEWS ON THIS POSITION.) WE ARE HENCE URGENTLY  
CONSIDERING THE FEASIBILITY OF A NAVY PROPOSAL FOR RE-  
STRUCTURING MIDDLE EAST FORCE IN A MANNER WHICH WILL ALLOW  
GOB TO STATE ACCURATELY THAT IT IS NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY  
WHICH PROVIDES SUPPORT TO UNITS OF THE FORCE. ESSENTIALLY,  
THIS PROPOSAL WOULD INVOLVE ELIMINATING "HOME PORT" AND  
HEADQUARTERS ASPECTS OF BAHRAIN PRESENCE BY PUTTING COMMAND  
"AT SEA" ABOARD FLAGSHIP LA SALLE, AND REDUCING LA SALLE'S  
IN-PORT TIME IN BAHRAIN WHILE INCREASING SOMEWHAT THE  
FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF FLAGSHIP VISITS IN OTHER  
COUNTRIES. IN ADDITION, MIDEASTFOR WOULD AS NECESSARY  
REDUCE ITS SUPPORT FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL IN BAHRAIN, IN-  
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SHORE REQUIREMENTS IN BAHRAIN WOULD BE A SMALL STAFF TO  
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MIDDLE EAST FORCE FOR APPROXIMATELY FOUR MONTHS AND DO NOT  
REQUIRE EXTENDED IN-PORT PERIODS TO CONDUCT EITHER THEIR  
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ALSO NEED TO RECEIVE OCCASIONAL LOGISTIC SUPPORT FLIGHTS  
DELIVERING SPARE PARTS, CRITICAL ITEMS, ETC. (THIS IS NOW  
DONE AT SUCH MAJOR PORTS AS KARACHI FOR NON-MIDEASTFOR  
SHIPS OPERATING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.) IT SHOULD BE NOTED  
THAT UNDER THIS PROPOSAL, MIDEASTFOR WOULD NOT SEEK TO  
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AFFECTED EMBASSIES, ITS OWN PORT LIAISON/SUPPORT PERSONNEL ON AN AS-NEEDED, WHERE-NEEDED, BASIS. YOUR ASSESSMENT, REQUESTED BELOW, THEREFORE, SHOULD NOT TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ADMINISTRATIVE IMPACT ON EMBASSY OPERATIONS OF MORE FREQUENT MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE IN YOUR COUNTRY.

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8. WHILE THE CURRENT GENERAL REGIONAL PATTERN OF THREE TO FOUR DAY SHIP VISITS WOULD CONTINUE, THE GOAL WOULD BE TO SECURE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF EXTENDED VISITS TO VARIOUS PORTS TO MEET THE FLAGSHIP'S NEEDS. THE FOLLOWING IS AN ILLUSTRATIVE LIST OF PORTS AND ANNUAL VISIT FREQUENCY/DURATION THAT WOULD AFFORD SEVERAL COMBINATIONS FOR REALIZING THIS GOAL:

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9. REQUEST SOONEST YOUR ASSESSMENT, WITHOUT REPEAT, WITHOUT ANY DISCUSSION WITH HOST GOVERNMENT, OF LIKELIHOOD GOVERNMENTS IRAN, KENYA, PAKISTAN, SAUDI ARABIA, OMAN, MAURITIUS, SUDAN AND SEYCHELLES, WOULD GIVE COMMITMENT TO ASSURE MIDDLE EAST FORCE FLAGSHIP PROPOSED EXTENDED VISITS. YOUR ASSESSMENT SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THE BAHRAINIS DESIRE TO MAKE CLEAR PUBLICLY THAT OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE AGREED TO SHARE IN SUPPORT OF REGIONAL MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE. IT SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF HOW POSSIBLE COM-

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MITMENT FOR INCREASED MIDDLE EAST FORCE SUPPORT BY HOST

GOVERNMENTS WOULD AFFECT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND OUR AREA SECURITY INTERESTS.

10. RE MIDEASTFOR DETERMINATION TO MINIMIZE BURDEN ON ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES OF EMBASSIES IN QUESTION, SHOULD ADDRESSEES FEEL NEED FOR MORE DETAILED ELABORATION OF MECHANICS INVOLVED PRIOR TO COMMENTING ON FEASIBILITY OF THIS PROPOSAL, COMMANDER MIDDLE EAST FORCE IS AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS THIS DIRECTLY AT YOUR REQUEST.

11. FOR JIDDA AND TEHRAN: PLEASE ALSO GIVE YOUR CURRENT ASSESSMENT AS TO WILLINGNESS OF SAG AND GOI TO COME OUT WITH A PUBLIC STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR BAHRAIN'S MAINTENANCE OF MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE, SHOULD SUCH STATEMENT BE USEFUL IN NEAR FUTURE.

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DRAFTED BY: PM/ISO:JEBURGESS:ML  
APPROVED BY:PM/ISO: GTCHURCHILL  
NEA/ARP - J. LYLE  
S/S/O:-S.GOLDSMITH

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P 102050Z FEB 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 030235

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 30235 ACTION ISLAMABAD, JIDDA, MUSCAT,  
NAIROBI, TEHRAN, VICTORIA, PORT LOUIS, INFO MANAMA, DHAHREN,  
ABU DHABI, DOHA, KIWAT DTD 10 FEB 77.

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INFO RUQMKM/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0000  
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SECDEF  
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S E C R E T STATE 030235

EXDIS MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOL RPT STATE 030235 ACTION KHARTOUM NEW DELHI 10 FEB 77 QUOTE

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6. DEPT SHARES WITH DOD THE GOAL OF RETAINING MIDDLE EAST  
FORCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN/PERSIAN GULF IF THAT IS  
POSSIBLE. (REFTEL REPORTS LATEST EXPRESSION OF BAHRAIN  
GOVERNMENT VIEWS ON THIS POSITION.) WE ARE HENCE URGENTLY  
CONSIDERING THE FEASIBILITY OF A NAVY PROPOSAL FOR RE-  
STRUCTURING MIDDLE EAST FORCE IN A MANNER WHICH WILL ALLOW  
GOB TO STATE ACCURATELY THAT IT IS NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY  
WHICH PROVIDES SUPPORT TO UNITS OF THE FORCE. ESSENTIALLY,  
THIS PROPOSAL WOULD INVOLVE ELIMINATING "HOME PORT" AND  
HEADQUARTERS ASPECTS OF BAHRAIN PRESENCE BY PUTTING COMMAND  
"AT SEA" ABOARD FLAGSHIP LA SALLE, AND REDUCING LA SALLE'S  
IN-PORT TIME IN BAHRAIN WHILE INCREASING SOMEWHAT THE  
FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF FLAGSHIP VISITS IN OTHER

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COUNTRIES. IN ADDITION, MIDEASTFOR WOULD AS NECESSARY  
REDUCE ITS SUPPORT FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL IN BAHRAIN, IN-  
CLUDING REMOVING DEPENDENTS. IF NEGOTIABLE, THE REMAINING  
SHORE REQUIREMENTS IN BAHRAIN WOULD BE A SMALL STAFF TO  
ADMINISTER LOGISTIC AND COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT FOR THE  
SHIPS, AND CREW REQUIRED TO OPERATE THE FLAG AIRCRAFT.

7. THE KEY TO OPERATIONAL FEASIBILITY OF SUCH AN ARRANGE-  
MENT WOULD BE WILLINGNESS OF AREA STATES TO ASSURE LONGER  
AND MORE FREQUENT FLAGSHIP VISITS. THE TWO DESTROYERS  
ROUTINELY DEPLOYED FROM THE ATLANTIC FLEET ARE ATTACHED TO  
MIDDLE EAST FORCE FOR APPROXIMATELY FOUR MONTHS AND DO NOT  
REQUIRE EXTENDED IN-PORT PERIODS TO CONDUCT EITHER THEIR  
MISSION OR SELF-MAINTENANCE. WE ENVISION NO CHANGE IN  
DESTROYER VISIT PATTERNS. THE FLAGSHIP, HOWEVER, IS  
PERMANENTLY DEPLOYED IN THE REGION, AND THUS REQUIRES A  
COMBINATION OF BRIEF PORT VISITS AND LONGER MAINTENANCE  
PERIODS. APPROXIMATELY 60 PERCENT OF ITS TIME IS SPENT IN  
PORT ANNUALLY. SOME SELF-MAINTENANCE CAN, IF NECESSARY,  
BE CONDUCTED AT ANCHOR, BUT SOME TIME ALONGSIDE A PIER IS

ESSENTIAL. IDEALLY, AT LEAST FOURTEEN CONSECUTIVE DAYS ARE REQUIRED FOR SELF-MAINTENANCE PORT VISITS. SUCH MAINTENANCE WE HAVE HITHERTO ACCOMPLISHED ALMOST SOLELY AT BAHRAIN, WHERE THE FLAGSHIP HAS TRADITIONALLY SPENT AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT SIX MONTHS TOTAL PER YEAR, WITH THE EXCEPTION DURING 1976 OF A FIVE-MONTH OVERHAUL IN THE PHILIPPINES. THE PROPOSAL WOULD HAVE THE FLAGSHIP IN BAHRAIN THREE TO FOUR MONTHS TOTAL PER YEAR. TO DO THIS, A TOTAL OF TWO TO THREE MONTHS OF SELF-MAINTENANCE PERIODS WOULD HAVE TO BE ARRANGED ELSEWHERE. MIDEASTFOR WILL ALSO NEED TO RECEIVE OCCASIONAL LOGISTIC SUPPORT FLIGHTS DELIVERING SPARE PARTS, CRITICAL ITEMS, ETC. (THIS IS NOW DONE AT SUCH MAJOR PORTS AS KARACHI FOR NON-MIDEASTFOR SHIPS OPERATING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.) IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT UNDER THIS PROPOSAL, MIDEASTFOR WOULD NOT SEEK TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF EMBASSY SUPPORT NORMALLY FURNISHED

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FOR PORT VISITS. IN FACT COMIDEASTFOR HAS OFFERED TO REDUCE THIS BURDEN BY PROVIDING, IN COORDINATION WITH AFFECTED EMBASSIES, ITS OWN PORT LIAISON/SUPPORT PERSONNEL ON AN AS-NEEDED, WHERE-NEEDED, BASIS. YOUR ASSESSMENT, REQUESTED BELOW, THEREFORE, SHOULD NOT TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ADMINISTRATIVE IMPACT ON EMBASSY OPERATIONS OF MORE FREQUENT MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENCE IN YOUR COUNTRY.

8. WHILE THE CURRENT GENERAL REGIONAL PATTERN OF THREE TO FOUR DAY SHIP VISITS WOULD CONTINUE, THE GOAL WOULD BE TO SECURE A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF EXTENDED VISITS TO VARIOUS PORTS TO MEET THE FLAGSHIP'S NEEDS. THE FOLLOWING IS AN ILLUSTRATIVE LIST OF PORTS AND ANNUAL VISIT FREQUENCY/DURATION THAT WOULD AFFORD SEVERAL COMBINATIONS FOR REALIZING THIS GOAL:

PORt .....NO. PER YR./DURATION EACH (WEEKS)

BANDAR ABBAS OR BUSHIRE .....THREE/TWO

MOMBASA .....TWO/TWO

KARACHI .....TWO/THREE

DAMMAN/JIDDA .....TWO/TWO

MUSCAT .....TWO/TWO

SEYCHELLES .....TWO/TWO

MAURITIUS .....TWO/TWO

PORT SUDAN .....TWO/TWO

9. REQUEST SOONEST YOUR ASSESSMENT, WITHOUT REPEAT, WITHOUT ANY DISCUSSION WITH HOST GOVERNMENT, OF LIKELIHOOD

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GOVERNMENTS IRAN, KENYA, PAKISTAN, SAUDI ARABIA, OMAN, MAURITIUS, SUDAN AND SEYCHELLES, WOULD GIVE COMMITMENT TO ASSURE MIDDLE EAST FORCE FLAGSHIP PROPOSED EXTENDED VISITS. YOUR ASSESSMENT SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THE BAHRAINIS DESIRE TO MAKE CLEAR PUBLICLY THAT OTHER COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE AGREED TO SHARE IN SUPPORT OF REGIONAL MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE. IT SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF HOW POSSIBLE COMMITMENT FOR INCREASED MIDDLE EAST FORCE SUPPORT BY HOST GOVERNMENTS WOULD AFFECT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND OUR AREA SECURITY INTERESTS.

10. RE MIDEASTFOR DETERMINATION TO MINIMIZE BURDEN ON ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES OF EMBASSIES IN QUESTION, SHOULD ADDRESSEES FEEL NEED FOR MORE DETAILED ELABORATION OF MECHANICS INVOLVED PRIOR TO COMMENTING ON FEASIBILITY OF THIS PROPOSAL, COMMANDER MIDDLE EAST FORCE IS AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS THIS DIRECTLY AT YOUR REQUEST.

11. FOR JIDDA AND TEHRAN: PLEASE ALSO GIVE YOUR CURRENT ASSESSMENT AS TO WILLINGNESS OF SAG AND GOI TO COME OUT WITH A PUBLIC STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR BAHRAIN'S MAINTENANCE OF MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE, SHOULD SUCH STATEMENT BE USEFUL IN NEAR FUTURE.

12. FOR ISLAMABAD: WE REALIZE THAT A RESPONSE IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT IN VIEW OF OTHER CURRENT US-PAK ISSUES. FOR SAKE OF CURRENT PROPOSAL, WE SUGGEST YOUR REPLY BE BASED ON ASSUMPTION THAT THESE ISSUES WILL HAVE BEEN RESOLVED IN A MANNER SATISFACTORY TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS PRIOR TO ANY POSSIBLE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOP OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE.

13. FOR NEW DELHI: WELCOME YOUR VIEWS ON ARRANGEMENTS ENVISAGED ABOVE.

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